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ABSTRACT

The unique problems of migrants require increased sensitivity by all levels of policymakers. Educational programs cannot be developed in law and then ignored in practice if worthwhile results are to be achieved. Federal and state level program goals and objectives must be further refined and effectively implemented at the local level. The specific cognitive skill areas and other educationally related needs of each migrant student must be defined. Important to this identification and the effective delivery of services is (a) comprehensive assessment of individual and group needs, (b) identification of all existing resources, (c) coordination of services available, and (d) the planning of specific activities by each service to meet the student's needs. Information gained through parent involvement, regular Title I services, and administrative and social experiences of those operating migrant education programs is necessary to tailor services to needs. The comprehensive packaging of services should be an outgrowth of and related directly to the special needs of each migrant child. Migrant student achievement cannot be improved solely through the academic instruction or supportive resources of ESEA, Title I; the social and economic conditions of the student's daily life must be considered in the planning and delivery of effective services. Local programs incorporating health, nutrition, counseling and related services supported by federal and/or state resources have been observed by the Council. (Author/NEC)

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NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE EDUCATION OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

SPECIAL REPORT

ON

MIGRANT EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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TITLE I--FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

DECLARATION OF POLICY

Sec. 101. In recognition of the special educational needs of children of low-income families and the impact that concentrations of low-income families have on the ability of local educational agencies to support adequate educational programs, the Congress hereby declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide financial assistance (as set forth in the following parts of this title) to local educational agencies serving areas with concentrations of children from low-income families to expand and improve their educational programs by various means (including preschool programs) which contribute particularly to meeting the special educational needs of educationally deprived children.

(20 U.S.C. 241a) Enacted April 11, 1965, P.L. 89-10, Title I, sec. 2, 79 Stat. 27; redesignated and amended January 2, 1968, P.L. 90-247, Title I, secs. 108(a) (2), 110, 81 Stat. 786, 787; amended April 13, 1970, P.L. 91-230, sec. 113(b) (2), 84 Stat. 126.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Sec. 148. (a) There shall be a National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children (hereinafter in this section referred to as the "National Council") consisting of fifteen members appointed by the President, without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointment in the competitive service, for terms of three years, except that (1) in the case of initial members, five shall be appointed for terms of one year each and five shall be appointed for terms of two years each, and (2) appointments to fill vacancies shall be only for such terms as remain unexpired. The National Council shall meet at the call of the Chairman.

(b) The National Council shall review and evaluate the administration and operation of this title, including its effectiveness in improving the educational attainment of educationally deprived children, including the effectiveness of programs to meet their occupational and career needs, and make recommendations for the improvement of this title and its administration and operation. These recommendations shall take into consideration experience gained under this and other Federal educational programs for disadvantaged children and to the extent appropriate, experience under other public and private educational programs for disadvantaged children.

(c) The National Council shall make such reports of its activities, findings, and recommendations (including recommendations for changes in the provisions of this title) as it may deem appropriate and shall make an annual report to the President and the Congress not later than March 31 of each calendar year. Such annual report shall include a report specifically on which of the various compensatory education programs funded in whole or in part under the provisions of this title, and of other public and private educational programs for educationally deprived children, hold the highest promise for raising the educational attainment of these educationally deprived children. The President is requested to transmit to the Congress such comments and recommendations as he may have with respect to such report.

(20 U.S.C. 2411) Enacted April 11, 1965, P.L. 89-10, Title I, sec. 2, 79 Stat. 34; amended Nov. 3, 1966, P.L. 89-750, Title I, sec. 115, 80 Stat. 1197; redesignated and amended Jan. 2, 1968, P.L. 90-247, Title I sec. 108(a) (4), 110, 114, 81 Stat. 786-788; amended and redesignated April 13, 1970, P.L. 91-230, Title I, secs. 112, 113(b) (4), 84 Stat. 125, 126.

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Introduction

During this report year, the National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children has examined the circumstances under which children of migrant workers live and are educated. Onsite observations to migrant camps and schools provided the Council an opportunity to talk with workers, students, parents and program administrators. From these interviews and other activities, the Council concluded that the level of program services is not sufficient. The Federal Government should take a more active role in improving the effectiveness of social and educational services impacting upon the migrant population.

The migrant family is often not considered a local district or state responsibility due to their constant mobility. Fulfilling the age old need for manpower during the harvesting seasons, the migrant worker receives minimum pay, while supporting the local agricultural industry. These circumstances have made the migrant worker and his family greatly dependent upon federal assistance to supplement local deficiencies. Improvements have been made through federal programs in the area of health, nutrition, and child labor practices. Many aspects of the migrant worker's life and the needs of the family units still remain unmet or severely underserved.

The Council's major concern is raising the educational attainment of the migrant child. It recognizes, however, that all areas of the migrant families' existence impact upon educational attainment.

The migrant family lives in the worst conditions ever witnessed by the Council. There is little the marginal farmworker is able to contribute to housing improvement. Many local or state laws governing migrant housing are not enforced or are avoided through the use of loopholes in existing laws. The construction or rehabilitation of housing must become priority. For example, where employers (farmers) receive federal benefit payments in connection with their operations, these payments should be used as a leverage for migrant housing compliance. As an initial action, the Federal Government should expand its housing development and assistance programs to incorporate migrant housing. Enforcement of strict standards must be maintained for the construction and maintenance of housing which utilize federal resources.

For many years, programs for income maintenance and disaster relief for farm owners have been a desirable aspect of state and federal agricultural policy. Ineligible for these public assistance programs often because of residency requirements, the migrant agricultural worker usually experiences drastic economic loss due to crop shortages. Little consideration, however, has been given to the provision of income maintenance or disaster assistance for this segment of the agricultural industry. The migrant worker should receive the income support necessary to overcome unforeseen agricultural disaster or institutionally contrived reductions in crop production.

The Council believes the most realistic approach to meeting the educational needs of the disadvantaged migrant child is through improvement of the delivery system for the migrant education programs. The urgency of the migrant families' unique needs should necessitate placement of migrant children as one of the highest priority groups among beneficiaries for federal educational program assistance.

The ESEA, Title I Migrant Education Program must mount, sustain, and coordinate effective educational services. This program has been developed to address many of the needs of this highly mobile population, including specific legislative provisions to encourage interstate coordination and cooperation of migrant educational programs.

The provisions Subpart I, Section 141 through 143 of Public Law 95-561, entitle each state educational agency to receive funds to establish or improve educational programs for children of migrant agricultural workers or migrant fishermen. Since its initiation, the program has grown in scope and resources. Programs are currently administered in 46 states and Puerto Rico. The budget has increased from $9 million to $173.5 million. During this same period, the number of migratory children served rose from approximately 80,000 to over one-half million.[1/]

1/ Complete data for funding and student participation by year is presented in Table I of the appendix. Statistics compiled by the U.S. Office of Education.

The Council was established by federal statute in 1965 to review and evaluate the administration and operation of federal educational programs serving the disadvantaged child, with specific emphasis on ESEA, Title I programs. It is required to prepare comments and recommendations for the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government for the improvement of the legislation and administration of these program services.

The Council has hosted and participated in seminars and discussions with federal, state and local migrant program administrators, teachers and parents. It has conducted site visits in Florida, Delaware, and New York to observe programs serving the migrant student. Significant aspects of the migrant program are highlighted in the following section. The Council believes that this information can contribute to the strengthening of migrant education program services.

FEDERAL ROLE

The Federal Role in migrant education includes the functions of policy development, technical assistance, grant processing and program monitoring. The Migrant Education Program, as operated by state educational agencies, requires extensive federal leadership. There are special requirements for program coordination and auditing.

The Migrant Education Program has unique administrative and operational characteristics which differ from that of Title I local educational programs. Since the inception of the Migrant

component of Title I in 1967, these characteristics have often been confused or inadequately expressed. The Migrant Education Program administrative unit was elevated to full divisional status in 1978. This should result in substantial improvement in the services to the migrant child.

There remain additional concerns which have yet to be addressed. Specific program goals and comprehensive planning to coordinate all local and state educational resources are required. Technical assistance provided by federal personnel must be strengthened. The basis for federal approval of state applications for assistance under the Migrant Education Program has never been properly defined. Sufficient safeguards must be established to assure proper and effective use of the funds allocated.

The Council is aware of considerations within the U.S. Office of Education to more formally review state applications and supports stringent requirements for grant approval.

THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW OF MIGRANT EDUCATION GRANTS WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE SPECIFIC QUANTIFIABLE CRITERIA.

Each state educational agency participating in the program submits an annual plan and cost estimate for its statewide program to the U.S. Office of Education. In Little Rock, Arkansas, a computer center tabulates and disseminates current information on migrant children. The most up-to-date information on population counts for each participating state are maintained. In addition,

each child enrolled in the program has data compiled on age, sex, birthplace, math and reading scores from the last four schools attended, and health and immunization information. This information is intended for use by local or state migrant program officials and teachers to quickly assess the needs of the child. Although identification of eligible migrant children is a state responsibility, approximately one-half million migrant children remain unserved.[2/] The Council believes this aspect of the Migrant Program should receive special attention at the federal level.

THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION REPORT CAUSES OF NONPARTICIPATION BY MIGRANT CHILDREN AND PRESENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEIR INCLUSION IN FUTURE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PROGRAMS.

The U.S. Office of Education should review the operations of each state's migrant education program on an annual basis. It should also initiate actions which will insure compliance and improve program quality. Although currently being reorganized, the migrant program administrative unit has historically been severely understaffed. The migrant education program staff is required to oversee state educational agency activities beyond those imposed on other compensatory education programs. State activities include identification and recruitment of migrant children, needs assessments and program development, local interagency coordination and interstate

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2/ Education Briefing Paper, USOE, August 1978, pg. 2.

coordination, program evaluation, application development, pupil accounting, local subcontractor grants, participation in the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) and information dissemination. The number of program staff (8) assigned to fulfill these responsibilities at the federal level have been insufficient. The Council supports the elevation of the Migrant Education Program to a divisional level and recognizes that sufficient staff is necessary if this new organizational structure is to achieve its purpose.

THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION REASSESS PERSONNEL NEEDS FOR EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Interstate Coordination

Many migrant families reside in individual school districts and/or states for only a few weeks during the year. Children of these families cannot enjoy the normal continuity of instructional goals, objectives and practices. This aspect of migrant life has led to the development of specific funding and legislative mandates for activities which are meant to coordinate the services of the multiple school districts. The Migrant Student Record Transfer System is designed and maintained to achieve this purpose.

During its site visits to New York State the Council received accounts by students who regularly migrated between that state and Florida. These students told of instances where high school credits were not applied from one state to the other. Council members have

also heard accounts where information available from the system was either insufficient or late in being transmitted.[3/]

Although the Council does not assume from these accounts that the Migrant Student Record Transfer System is inefficient in all areas, it does see a need for overall improvement in its function and reliability. States which participate in Migrant Education Programs should have provisions for the transfer and accrual of graduation credits. The planning for such agreements could be based upon the activities of Washington State - Texas Secondary Credit Exchange. Each program application should specifically detail how the transfer of credits for high school graduation from one state to another will be accomplished.

THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION UNDERTAKE ACTIVITIES TO:

(1) Develop specific policies and practices to facilitate the adequate exchange of information on migrant education program students, services, needs, credit accrual and program administration.

(2) Develop and disseminate policy statements and written guidance for program directors in the utilization of existing educational and social services, community and parent involvement.

STATE MONITORING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The State Educational Agency (SEA) operates Migrant Education Programs and monitors the delivery of services by local contractors.

3/ NACEDC Site Visits and Council Meeting Minutes, 1978.

In both instances it is incumbent upon the SEA to assure adequate attention to the unique educational needs of the migrant student.

The state agency should validate instructional course design. It should also emphasize and reenforce a standard for coordination of other educationally related services. Guidelines for nutrition, health care, social counseling and other areas provided for by federal and/or state resources should routinely be monitored and evaluated.

THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION ENCOURAGE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES TO INCREASE THE COORDINATION AND ADEQUATE DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL AND REALATED SERVICES IN MIGRANT EDUCATION.

The state educational agency is the most effective organization through which ongoing training of teachers and administrators working with migrant education can be accomplished. Their ability to solicit assistance from appropriate institutions of higher education and public and private interest groups should be utilized. When possible, state agencies should directly review teaching applications and assist program operators in selecting personnel familiar with the backgrounds of migrant workers.

Conclusion

The unique problems of Migrants require increased sensitivity by all levels of policymakers. Educational programs cannot be developed in law and then ignored in practice if worthwhile results are to be achieved.

Federal and state level program goals and objectives must be further refined and effectively implemented at the local level. The specific cognitive skill areas and other educationally related needs of each migrant student must be defined. Important to this identification and the effective delivery of services is (a) comprehensive assessment of individual and group needs, (b) identification of all existing resources, (c) coordination of services available, and (d) the planning of specific activities by each service to meet the student's needs.

Information gained through parent involvement, regular Title I services, and administrative and social experiences of those operating migrant education programs will be necessary to tailor services to needs. The comprehensive packaging of program activities and services should be an outgrowth of and related directly to the special needs of each migrant child. The Council has observed local programs incorporating health, nutrition, counseling and other related services supported by other federal and/or state resources. It cannot be over emphasized that migrant student achievement cannot be improved solely through the academic instruction or supportive resources of ESEA, Title I. The social and economic conditions of the student's daily life must be considered in the planning and delivery of effective services.

APPENDIX

TABLE I -- ESEA, Title I Migrant Education Program National Child Counts and Allocations.

Title I, ESEA, Migrant Education Program
National Child Counts and Allocations

	FORMULA CHILDREN (FTE)	ALLOCATION
FY 1967	169,910	$ 9,737,847
FY 1968	163,282	$ 41,692,425
FY 1969	157,153	$ 45,556,074
FY 1970	159,650	$ 51,014,319
FY 1971	161,026	$ 57,608,680
FY 1972	161,859	$ 64,822,926
FY 1973	162,480	$ 72,772,167
FY 1974	162,480	$ 78,331,437
FY 1975	212,473	$ 91,953,160
FY 1976	207,474	$ 97,090,478
FY 1977	267,791	$130,909,832
FY 1978	296,428	$145,759,940
FY 1979	323,504	$173,548,829

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